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T.O. MAYOR ROB FORD NAMED NEWSMAKER OF THE YEAR WITH 63% OF THE VOTE. TAKE THAT, CHRIS HADFIELD PAGE 4

ALL HAIL ST. NICK

Gwen Barschel is surrounded at her Regina home by some of her more than 400 Santa Claus figurines and other items bearing the likeness of old St. Nicholas. She plans to continue adding to her massive collection, which she says spreads Christmas cheer to her family and friends. Story, page 3. SARAH TAGUIAM/METRO

City slammed over tax break on parking lot

Exemption. Regina Trades and Skills Centre leases space from energy giant Suncor

MARCO VIGLIOTTI
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Critics are questioning a city hall decision to grant a five-year property-tax exemption to a parking lot owned by one of the country's largest oil companies.

City council approved the exemption during its regular meeting last week at the behest of the Regina Trades and Skills Centre (RTSC), which leases the north Albert Street lot from Canadian energy giant Suncor.

"(The RTSC) provides a tremendous amount of value to the community, to folks who are looking to get into the trades," Coun. Wade Murray said in support of the exemption for the non-profit institution, which provides short-term trades and skills training.

"Why would we not ... give those members who own vehicles a place to park?

"It would be ludicrous not to do this."

Transit advocate John Klein, however, argues that the move merely subsidizes driving, to the detriment of Regina's often-criticized bus service.

"I have nothing against the training centre, but city council's policy ... benefits people who drive and harms the transit system," Klein told Metro on Sunday.

"Whenever parking lots are subsidized, you end up harming the transit system by making it cheaper to drive."

Klein also wants to know why council would provide a tax break to one of the country's wealthiest companies.

"It definitely ... is helping Suncor, which made over $1.2 billion in profit in the last quarter," he charged.

"Obviously, they don't need a tax break."

But RTSC chairman John Hopkins says in a letter to the city that the training facility, rather than Suncor, would foot the parking lot's tax bill under the terms of its lease.

"Lessee shall ... pay all taxes ... in respect of any activities on the land ... including property taxes," Hopkins states in the letter, citing a passage in the lease agreement.

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Last-minute panic

There's no time like tomorrow for Sask. Christmas shoppers

Holiday procrastination runs high on the Prairies, according to a survey that suggests Saskatchewan residents are among the biggest last-minute Christmas shoppers in the land.

CIBC's poll, detailing the holiday shopping habits of Canadians, pegs Saskatchewan as one of the provinces with the most people putting off gift-buying until shortly before Dec. 25.

As of Dec. 16, the survey says, 74 per cent of people in Saskatchewan and Manitoba had not finished buying gifts — compared to the national average of 69 per cent. And Quebecers aren't much better.

Metro took to the busy Midtown Plaza mall in Saskatoon on Sunday to get to the bottom of the phenomenon.

Krystal Stewart, a 22-year-old radio host originally from Vancouver, said she isn't surprised.

"Leading up to the holidays, sales are on like crazy. As soon as Halloween is over, it goes full-swing into Christmas," Stewart said of the trend back in B.C.

"I didn't notice that so much here. I think there's less of a consumer base in Saskatchewan."

For Leah Boyd, a mother finishing her shopping on the weekend before Christmas, the answer is simple.

"It's too cold," Boyd said with a laugh. "Nobody wants to go outside."

Mitch Begin, 25, started shopping only last Friday.

"Maybe we're more laid-back so we don't get so stressed so quickly," he said.

"Or maybe (it's because) we're not that (populated), so you can go last-minute and not get too swamped."

JACOB MORGAN/METRO IN SASKATOON

Leah Boyd and her son Jack, 4, doing some last-minute shopping. JACOB MORGAN/METRO IN SASKATOON

She's got more Claus in her home than a crazy cat lady

A very merry legion. Regina woman's home is red, white and jolly all over at Christmas

SARAH TAGUIAM
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It all started with one red-and-white felt Santa.

Fast-forward 25 years, and Regina's Gwen Barschel has collected more than 400.

From hand-crafted figurines, dolls, earrings and even tissue paper, hundreds of Santa tchotchkes cover the cupboards, kitchen sinks and walls of Barschel's house in the city's northwest.

"I bought my first Santa at a craft sale at work, and after that I thought, 'Geez, they're kind of cute.' And that's how it all began," Barschel, a nurse, told Metro.

Initially, she scoured stores and the Internet to add to her collection. But in the past five years, Barschel has become far more focused on getting unusual Santa figurines during her travels.

Her most recently acquired likenesses of the jolly old elf are from a recent trip to New Orleans: a Santa painted on an orange soft-shell crab's carapace and a figure hand-carved on a cypress knee, commonly seen in Louisiana swamps.

"One of my favourite ones is this small Santa figure my son got me from Rome, with the word Vaticano on the back," she said. "I just thought that was so rare."

Barschel has never attempted to put a dollar figure on her collection, though she estimates its value at "a few thousand dollars."

"I have those little toy ones that are a dollar, to figures that are $60 to $80," she said, noting that she has no duplicates in her collection.

Asked whether she's going to continue her collection, Barschel gives a wholehearted "yes."

"My friends always say how it's so cheerful and festive when I bring the Santas out, and I like that I could do that for them."

Home is where the heart is

Some of her most prized Santas include a series of works hand-crafted by a Regina artist.

Gwen Barschel sits alongside several of her more than 400 Santa Claus items, which she has collected over many years. Inset: her Santas come in all shapes and sizes. SARAH TAGUIAM/METRO

Equity crowdfunding launched amid concerns

Saskatchewan has become the first Canadian province to give a green light to equity crowdfunding, though the jury is out on whether the new regulations strike the right balance between accessibility and investor protection.

Earlier this month, the government's Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority announced an exemption to provincial rules that would allow startups and small businesses to raise capital through crowdfunding by issuing securities, such as shares.

While the exemption — which lifts some disclosure regulations for securities — provides new opportunities, it also presents tangible risks, according to one expert.

Brian Koscak, a Toronto-based securities lawyer and chairman of the Exempt Market Dealers Association of Canada, calls it the "democratization of investment and loss."

With crowdfunding, numerous investors contribute small sums to a project — usually through an online portal such as the U.S. website Kickstarter.

Unlike the projects on Kickstarter, however, equity crowdfunding investments involve sales of securities — complex and risky financial tools that typically only certified professionals are allowed to sell and issue.

The province's new rules limit prospective businesses to two six-month offerings of $150,000 each during the course of a year, as well as prohibiting any individual from investing more than $1,500 in an offering.

MARCO VIGLIOTTI/METRO

Toronto Mayor Rob Ford named Canada's Newsmaker of the Year

Snagged 63% of vote. Naughty won out over nice in annual poll as crack-smoking mayor beat out some other notable Canadians

Few could have predicted that Canada's moment in the global spotlight this year would be courtesy of a crack-smoking, "drunken-stupor" mayor who uses graphic sexual language on live television.

Rob Ford was a one-man news cycle, as he met each wave of allegations of bad behaviour with wild counter-allegations, mixed with a few gaffes and a sprinkling of apologies.

It is for these reasons and more that editors and news directors across the country selected Ford as Canada's Newsmaker of the Year.

The headline-grabbing, sound bite-generating Toronto mayor received 63 per cent of the votes in the annual survey of the country's newsrooms by The Canadian Press.

Some of those who voted said they wanted to pick Chris Hadfield, who received 16 per cent of the votes thanks to his inspirational time as commander of the International Space Station. But most felt there was no choice but Ford.

"We loved that Alice Munro won the Nobel Prize. We were amazed when Christy Clark won the B.C. election. Theresa Spence definitely made waves, as did Nigel Wright in the PMO," said Adrienne Tanner, the deputy editor of the Vancouver Sun.

"But really no one tops Rob Ford's antics of the past year, which went from outrageous to ludicrous to pitiful. He's the hands-down winner for bad newsmaker of the year. No one else comes close."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Toronto Mayor Rob Ford holds up a bobblehead doll in his likeness while signing hundreds of them for charity at city hall in Toronto on Nov. 12. FRANK GUNN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Past newsmakers

A look back at Canada's Newsmakers of the Year, as determined in the annual poll of newsrooms by The Canadian Press:

- **2012.** Luka Magnotta, alleged killer
- **2011.** Jack Layton, politician
- **2010.** Russell Williams, sex killer
- **2009.** Stephen Harper, politician
- **2008.** Stephen Harper, politician
- **2007.** The Mounties
- **2006.** The Canadian soldier

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Ice storm lashes Eastern Canada

A dark Christmas. Hundreds of thousands could be left without power for days

A steady dose of freezing rain across parts of Eastern Canada turned roads and sidewalks into skating rinks Sunday, cut power to hundreds of thousands of people, and played havoc with holiday plans at one of the busiest travel times of the year.

Anxious passengers found themselves stranded in airports from Toronto to St. John's, N.L., days before Christmas.

The situation drew comparisons to the deadly ice storm that encased Quebec in 1998, as hydro crews across the region struggled to restore service.

"Some of the crews I've spoken to said this is as bad," said Blair Peberdy, vice-president of Toronto Hydro, which had 250,000 customers without power.

"These storms tend to wreak havoc and we have to go street by street with chainsaws."

Ontario's premier said Sunday that she had talked to many mayors of communities affected by the storm to offer provincial support. She said the province was going to provide tree harvesters to some communities to help crews clear away downed trees.

"We're going to bring in the resources that are needed to deal with the situation," said Kathleen Wynne.

At least one municipality, the township of Woolwich near Waterloo, declared a state of emergency.

Salting and sanding crews worked through the night Saturday and into Sunday in an uphill battle against a dangerous mix of snow, ice pellets and freezing rain that stretched from Niagara Falls, Ont., to the Atlantic Coast.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Pedestrians clear the sidewalks on a closed-off Soudan Avenue in Toronto after an ice storm caused havoc knocking down trees and power lines in much of the city on Sunday. AARON VINCENT ELKAIM/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Wreaking havoc

- Overall, power outages affected about 350,000 customers in Ontario.
- The entire province of New Brunswick remained under a weather warning on Sunday. Much of Nova Scotia was under a freezing-rain warning, while P.E.I. was under a warning of snow and ice pellets.

Ford, Kelly present united front in T.O.

As city officials, staff and clean-up crews worked to repair the havoc caused by an icy storm, Toronto Mayor Rob Ford was unreachable, according to a source.

The mayor could not be found all Sunday morning by city staff working to organize warming centres and other emergency preparations, the source said.

Just after 10:30 a.m., Ford's account tweeted he would be holding a press conference at Metro Hall with city staff at 1:30 p.m.

"The city's emergency operation centre was activated yesterday to manage the storm impacts," Ford said, surrounded by Deputy Mayor Norm Kelly and Coun. Denzil Minnan-Wong, who chairs Public Works.

Even the deputy mayor, who had been the point person for city officials dealing with the storm, said he hadn't spoken to Ford until the press conference.

But Kelly said he was happy that he, Ford and Minnan-Wong presented a united front.

"I think it was important for the three members of council with an interest in this to appear together with the same message," he said.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Toronto Deputy Mayor Norm Kelly speaks to the media as Mayor Rob Ford stands in the background at a news conference after an ice storm left more than 250,000 customers without power on Sunday. CHRIS YOUNG/THE CANADIAN PRESS

In pictures

1 Halifax. Flight delays

An Air Canada jet is de-iced at Halifax Stanfield International Airport. ANDREW VAUGHAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

2 Toronto. An icy stare

An ice-covered statue of Al Waxman in Kensington Market. IAN WILLMS/THE CANADIAN PRESS

3 Kingston, Ont. Instant rink

Kids skate on an ice-covered street.
ANDREA LOKEN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

4 Toronto. Fallen Santa

This lawn Santa on Pickering Street collapsed under the weight of the ice.
KEITH BEATY/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

5 Toronto. Tree trouble

A Toronto city bus manoeuvres around a fallen tree on Jones Avenue. RANDY RISLING/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Gas-station worker Maria Gonzalez Jimenez hugs a colleague after winning the second prize of the Christmas lottery "El Gordo" (The Fat One) in Santa Cruz de Tenerife in the Canary Islands, Spain, on Sunday. ANDRES GUTIERREZ/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Spaniards hope for The Fat One

'El Gordo.'
World's richest lottery offers respite for some from country's economic turmoil

The winners of Spain's cherished Christmas lottery — the world's richest — celebrated around the country Sunday, a moment of joy and relief after another year of a brutal financial crisis.

Millions had been glued to their televisions on Sunday as 2.5 billion euros ($3.6 billion) in prize money was distributed. The drawing is so popular that most of Spain's 46 million people watched at least part of the live four-hour show, hoping they would hear their ticket as school children called out the lucky numbers.

Unlike lotteries that offer one large jackpot, Spain's yuletide drawing sprinkles a variety of winnings on thousands of ticket holders.

The top prize, known as "El Gordo" (The Fat One), gave lucky winners 400,000 euros ($546,200) per ticket Sunday, while the second-best number netted them 125,000 euros ($170,700).

However, this year for the first time, the tax man will claim 20 per cent of winnings above 2,500 euros ($3,400), as the Spanish government strives to right an economy saddled with an unemployment rate of 26 per cent. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jumping for joy

"We jumped out of bed and ran out."
Raul Clavero, mechanic, one of the El Gordo lottery winners

Cocktails for a cause. Bars that donate profits to charity enjoy huge success

It's become a place where you can eat, drink and be merry — but also give to charity.

Since opening its doors last December, a Houston bar that donates 100 per cent of its profits to local charities has far exceeded expectations, helping turn cocktails and glasses of wine and beer into warm blankets and hot meals for those in need.

By the end of this year, the Original OKRA Charity Saloon will have donated about $300,000 US to a dozen organizations. The group that runs the saloon, a collection of some of the city's best-known bars and restaurants, had expected to donate only about a third of that amount in its first year.

"It was a good year. It's pretty amazing," said Mike Criss, the bar's general manager. "It's just the community coming together."

The charity saloon is one of several bars around the U.S. using that business model as a way to give back. There are similar bars or concepts in New Orleans, Washington, D.C., and Portland, Ore.

The Houston saloon, which this year was named one of the country's best bars by Playboy magazine and got a shout-out on The Colbert Report, has four charities competing for donations each month. Customers vote for a winner who gets the following month's proceeds.

The Oregon Public House, a similar bar in Portland, has also had success, donating more than $15,000 US to charities in its first six months of operation.

"I believe in this model, not just for us but for my city, for our state, for our country," said Ryan Saari, director of The Oregon Public House's board. "I think there is a lot of good that could be done, stepping outside of the box a little bit in terms of how we support and fund our non-profits." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Iceland

Drive slowly, elf crossing ahead

In Iceland, stories abound of the "hidden folk" — thousands of elves, making their homes in Iceland's wilderness.

Elf advocates have joined forces with environmentalists to urge the Icelandic Road and Coastal Commission and local authorities to abandon a highway project building a direct route from the Alftanes peninsula to the Reykjavik suburb of Gardabaer. They fear disturbing elf habitat and claim the area is particularly important because it contains an elf church.

A survey conducted by the University of Iceland in 2007 found that 62 per cent of the 1,000 respondents thought it was at least possible that elves exist. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Holiday ham heist

Huge haul of hock worth a lot of dough

Some thieves will be pigging out this holiday season after several hundred hams were stolen in London, Ont.

The Honey-Bee Ham Co. says the huge haul of meat was pinched from a refrigeration truck Friday night.

The total cost of the stolen ham is estimated at more than $10,000.

But the company says it's continuing to take orders and that those with existing purchases will still go home with their ham in time for the holidays.

The company is not worried the thieves will be able to crack its 30-year-old honey glazed ham recipe, as the stolen meat was unfinished. THE CANADIAN PRESS

New Hampshire

Hikers found safe

Two Canadian hikers are safe after getting lost on New Hampshire's Mount Adams.

New Hampshire Fish and Game says the pair had hiked to the summit on Saturday and were heading to a shelter to spend the night but took the wrong trail in the wind and rain and ended up in King Ravine, a treacherous boulder field.

Worried about the approaching ice storm, one of the men used a satellite tracker emergency beacon, which triggered a call to authorities. New Hampshire officials were notified around 6:45 p.m., found the hikers just before midnight and brought them to safety by 4 a.m.

Officials say the pair was fortunate because they had plenty of gear, including a bivy sack and sleeping bags. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

An unbearably cold debut in Winnipeg

Wind chill kept temperatures hovering around the –40 C mark all weekend long in Winnipeg, but the weather was perfect ... if you're a polar bear. Hearty Winnipeggers who could bear it headed to Assiniboine Park Zoo to see the zoo's two newest polar bears cubs, Aurora and Kaska. The year-old cubs couldn't have asked for better weather for their public debut. SHANE GIBSON/METRO IN WINNIPEG

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Will some users of medical marijuana be priced out?

Access program.
Worries new federal rules will leave some high and dry

Mark Gobuty isn't raising cattle or cultivating corn on his farm north of Toronto — he's growing medical marijuana.

His company, The Peace Naturals Project, is one of the first to be approved by Health Canada to commercially produce and distribute dried cannabis ahead of changes next spring to Ottawa's marijuana medical access program.

Starting April 1, the program that began in 2001 will no longer require medicinal marijuana users to buy their medication through Ottawa's one approved supplier, grow their own plants, or designate someone to be their personal grower. Instead, users will be restricted to buying their cannabis from a list of approved suppliers.

Mark Gobuty, founder and CEO of The Peace Naturals Project, stands in one of the cannabis-growing greenhouses in Clearview, Ont. FRANK GUNN/THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Gobuty, Peace Naturals' chief executive and co-founder, says his company is focused on providing a quality product, but he also understands the compassionate side of drug dispensing.

"We certainly have vision. We want to help people," said Gobuty during an interview at his secluded and highly secured farm in Clearview Township.

"It's really (about) the purpose and intent of the medicine we can provide. If we can do one thing, we want to provide people with peace."

But that peace will come at a price. And some prescribed users, such as Marcel Gignac, from Amherst, N.S., are worried that privatizing the medical cannabis industry will come at too high a cost.

Gignac's supplier is a designated grower, but his wife, who also uses the herb to ease the pain from arthritis, knee and hip replacements, grows her own plants. He estimates she pays about five cents per gram for her medication.

He said he and other members from the volunteer-run Medicinal Cannabis Patients' Alliance of Canada, some of whom are unable to work due to their conditions, will not be able to afford market prices.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"My options are: I can sit back and suffer and die, or grow it illegally or go to jail."

Marcel Gignac, a 51-year-old from Amherst, N.S., who smokes 30 grams a day to treat an aggressive form of multiple sclerosis.

Edgar M. Bronfman Sr.
Canadian-born billionaire dies at 84

Edgar M. Bronfman Sr. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Edgar M. Bronfman Sr., the Canadian-born billionaire and longtime president of the World Jewish Congress, which lobbied the Soviets to allow Jews to emigrate and helped spearhead the search for hidden Nazi loot, died Saturday. He was 84.

Bronfman died at his New York home surrounded by family, according to the family charity he led, The Samuel Bronfman Foundation.

Bronfman was born in Montreal on June 20, 1929 and made his fortune with his family's Seagram's liquor empire. He joined the family business in 1957 and took over as chairman and CEO in 1971, continuing the work of his father, Samuel. Under Bronfman's leadership, Seagram expanded its offerings and was eventually acquired by French media and telecom group Vivendi Universal in 2000. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Over 100 workers died

Charges laid in deadly Bangladeshi garment factory fire

Police charged the owners of a Bangladeshi garment factory and 11 employees with culpable homicide Sunday for alleged negligence leading to the death of 112 workers in a raging fire that engulfed the factory last year.

It was the first time Bangladeshi authorities had sought to prosecute factory owners in the world's second-largest garment industry.

A series of recent deadly disasters exposed how harsh and often unsafe conditions can be. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S. card data juicy target

The U.S. is the juiciest target for hackers hunting credit card information. And experts say incidents like the recent data theft at Target's stores will get worse before they get better.

That's in part because U.S. credit and debit cards rely on an easy-to-copy magnetic strip on the back of the card, which stores account information using the same technology as cassette tapes.

"We are using 20th-century cards against 21st-century hackers," says Mallory Duncan, general counsel at the National Retail Federation. "The thieves have moved on but the cards have not."

In most countries outside the U.S., people carry cards that use digital chips to hold account information. The chip generates a unique code every time it's used. That makes the cards more difficult for criminals to replicate. So difficult that they generally don't bother.

"The U.S. is the top victim location for card counterfeit attacks like this," says Jason Oxman, chief executive of the Electronic Transactions Association.

The breach that exposed the credit card and debit card information of as many as 40 million Target customers who swiped their cards between Nov. 27 and Dec. 15 is still under investigation. It's unclear how the breach occurred and what data, exactly, criminals have. Although security experts say no security system is fail-safe, there are several measures stores, banks and credit card companies can take to protect against these attacks.

Credit and debit cards in the U.S. are easy targets as most still use magnetic strips. PHIL COALE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Companies haven't further enhanced security because it can be expensive. And while global credit and debit card fraud hit a record $11.27 billion US last year, those costs accounted for just 5.2 cents of every $100 in transactions, according to the Nilson Report, which tracks global payments.

Another problem: Retailers, banks and credit card companies each want someone else to foot most of the bill. Card companies want stores to pay to better protect their internal systems. Stores want card companies to issue more sophisticated cards. Banks want to preserve the profits they get from older processing systems.

Card payment systems work much the way they have for decades. The magnetic strip on the back of a credit or debit card contains the cardholder's name, account number, the card's expiration date and a security code different from the three or four-digit security code printed on the back of most cards.

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NERO IS JUST ONE CASE OF CRUELTY

URBAN COMPASS

Paul Sullivan
regina@metronews.ca

Who would do such a thing?

That is, dump a flammable liquid on a seven-week-old puppy and set it on fire?

Nero, the puppy in question, has survived the assault, and has a new, permanent home for Christmas. A happy ending. Wag your tail!

It sure didn't start that way. On or around Nov. 6, a human being (barely) torched the male dog at a work camp in Patuanak, north of Meadow Lake. A Good Samaritan found the little guy and took him to a Calgary animal shelter, where, after numerous medical procedures and the loss of his ears, he has mostly recovered and is hanging out with his new family in Okotoks, Alta.

If anything, he looks even cuter without his ears, although you wouldn't wish that on a dog.

The thing is, Nero has become a Facebook star with more than 8,600 "likes." People have offered to adopt him, send him money or just adore him from afar. And you have to admit that he is a cute little dickens and seems completely oblivious to his rough entry program.

While you applaud the outpouring of love for this resilient pup, you have to wonder what it's like to be so twisted, broken and demented as to pour your hate onto someone so lovable and set him on fire.

I use the word "someone" as opposed to "something" because that's where we need to go when we talk about animals. Slowly — and for some it's happening more slowly than for others — our attitudes are changing. We're beginning to see our fellow creatures as beings with identities, and not just as meat, fur or scapegoats.

It helps if they're cute, like Nero. But I'm really not telling you anything you don't know by pointing out that millions of the world's cutest critters — lambs, calves, piglets, etc. — are slaughtered around the world every week via means that are as cruel as the fate that nearly consumed Nero.

And nobody launches a Facebook page for them.

Here's where I shamefully (and shamelessly) declare that I'm not a vegetarian, but it's a perennial New Year's resolution. If we (and I mean me too) are serious about our humanity, we're going to have to find a way to address dietary and entertainment needs that do serious collateral damage to animals.

Stories such as Nero's help. That puppy face is personal, unlike the countless faces of his fellow sacrifices who go unnoticed and unmourned. One puppy rescued is a good thing. What he does to our attitudes is even better.

Nero burned while we fiddled. At this time of reflection and celebration, his happy story is something to cheer about. And something to think about. Merry Christmas, Saskatchewan.

Other casualties

But I'm really not telling you anything you don't know by pointing out that millions of the world's cutest critters — lambs, calves, piglets, etc. — are slaughtered around the world every week via means that are as cruel as the fate that nearly consumed Nero.

ZOOM

Take a closer look at the sun

COURTESY NASA GODDARD SPACE FLIGHT CENTER

Parts not visible to the naked eye are captured by NASA

This still image was taken from a new NASA movie of the sun from NASA's Solar Dynamics Observatory, or SDO, showing the range of wavelengths — invisible to the naked eye — that the telescope can view.

SDO converts the wavelengths into an image humans can see, and the light is transformed into a rainbow of colours. METRO

What's happening

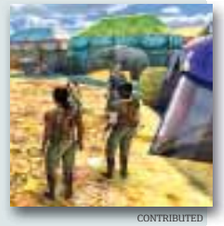
Wavelengths convey information about components of the sun. From left to right (measured in angstroms):

- **1,700.** Surface of the sun, as well as a layer of the sun's atmosphere called the chromosphere, which lies just above the photosphere and is where the temperature begins rising.
- **1,600.** Mixture between the upper photosphere and what's called the transition region, an area between the chromosphere and the uppermost layer of the sun's atmosphere (the corona).
- **335.** Active region of the corona. The dark areas (coronal holes) are places where very little radiation is emitted, yet are the main source of solar wind particles.
- **304.** This light is emitted from the chromosphere and transition region.
- **211.** This wavelength shows hotter, magnetically active regions in the sun's corona.
- **193.** A slightly hotter region of the corona, and also the much hotter material of a solar flare.
- **171.** This wavelength shows the corona when it's quiet. It also shows giant magnetic arcs called coronal loops.
- **131.** The hottest material in a flare.
- **94.** The regions of the corona during a solar flare.

Clickbait

ANDREW FIFIELD
andrew.fifield@metronews.ca

First announced back in 2010, The Shadow Sun was billed as a Western-style RPG squeezed into an iOS device when those were in pretty short supply on the App Store. It's three years later and there are lots of RPGs to choose from, so how does The Shadow Sun hold up?



CONTRIBUTED

The answer is: "Quite well, thank you very much." Things start off as you've come to expect by now — you get a few character customization options, establish some baseline stats (strength, endurance, etc.) and then you're dumped into the world. Tasked with protecting a rather pompous diplomat visiting a neighbouring city enduring an awful plague, things quickly become … complicated … and the game opens up.

The story so far — I've put about four hours of playtime into the game — is rich and the lore is accessible at any time in your menu, and it gets expanded upon as you work your way through the main story. Of course, this being an RPG, there's a myriad of side quests to take on that will richly reward you with loot and weapons, boosting the custom features of your character. There are several locations and cities to explore while you're at it, but no persistent world between them like an Elder Scrolls game. Instead, you'll be quickly travelling, which I find preferable for mobile gaming, to be honest.

Combat is where things get a little tricky, mostly due to the limitations of playing on an iPhone. The floating thumbstick used to control your character can be as unco-operative as the rest of them, but it's never been fatal. Either way, the real treat of The Shadow Sun is the immersion of the world and you'll find yourself rewarded if you take your time to explore and read up on the kingdom's history.

The Shadow Sun is certainly ambitious, and sometimes the performance doesn't quite reach what the developers had in mind. But, swords and spells can be in awfully short supply on iPhone, especially ones wielded in an engaging and dangerous world. It's hours of exploring, fighting and character-building for the price of a meal at McDonald's. (iOS/$7.99)

Twitter

@metropicks asked: The majority of Canadians polled last week said they weren't finished Christmas shopping. What's your strategy?

@tallertrees: Strategy? More like frantic Christmas eve running around.

@alxrocks: - look at a calendar, plan ahead, and shop in September…

Follow @metropicks and take part in our daily poll.

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Julie Delpy and Ethan Hawke returned in 2013 with the next installation of their romance trilogy, Before Midnight. CONTRIBUTED

Reasons we love film in 2013

The best of the year.
Today we look at the best of 2013 — tomorrow, the worst

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News in Hollywood

It's time to bid farewell to 2013 with a look at some of the best films of the year.

12 Years a Slave
An astonishing triumph in filmmaking, Steve McQueen's true tale of America's ugly past is not only an important movie, it's also a beautifully made one. It's visceral, haunting and cathartic, featuring a massive, stellar cast — though Brad Pitt's supporting performance keeps it from being absolutely perfect, one sour note in an otherwise flawless symphony.

Her
What sounds overly quirky on paper — a quiet loner (Joaquin Phoenix) falls in love with his computer's new OS (voiced by Scarlett Johansson) — turns out to be one of the most moving and insightful examinations of intimacy in years. What Spike Jonze understands about intimacy is truly impressive.

Gravity
Alfonso Cuaron advances the art of filmmaking with this immersive and terrifying yet perfectly simple tale of being lost in space. He's also the first filmmaker to properly justify the use of 3-D since James Cameron brought it back into fashion with Avatar.

Inside Llewyn Davis
The Coen Brothers' darkly comic rumination on creative pursuits and fame set in the 1960s New York City folk scene is a joy to behold, even if they are trying to bum you out.

Before Midnight
Maybe it's a bit like cheating, since Richard Linklater, Julie Delpy and Ethan Hawke have been working on these characters for 18 years, but there are few who have achieved such honest on-screen portrayals of how relationships evolve.

Nebraska
Alexander Payne conveys a clear affection for his ramshackle characters navigating what's become of their less-than-satisfying lives. Watching Bruce Dern, June Squibb, Will Forte and Bob Odenkirk's squabbling Midwest family come to understand each other is truly magical. Black-and-white filmmaking has rarely felt so warm.

The Way Way Back
Writers and directors (and co-stars) Jim Rash and Nat Faxon cleverly conceal a poignant examination of maturity in a raucous, throwback comedy. Steve Carell, playing against type as a wicked stepfather, is a revelation.

Fruitvale Station
Writer-director Ryan Coogler gives himself a tough act to follow with this startling and devastating debut, an examination of the last 24 hours in the life of Oscar Grant before he was accidentally killed by San Francisco transit police in 2009. A celebration of life that will get you angry all over again.

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METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Dwyane Wade and Gabrielle Union ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Christmas in Miami: Dwyane Wade pops the question

Dwyane Wade and Gabrielle Union are engaged. The Miami Heat star proposed to his longtime girlfriend Saturday and the actress accepted. They announced the news through social media, around the same time as the two-time defending NBA champions were gathering for a team Christmas party.

"She said YES!!!" Wade posted to his Twitter and Instagram accounts, with a photo of Union wearing a large diamond solitaire on the ring finger of her left hand. It will be the second marriage for both Union, 41, and Wade, who turns 32 next month. No date has been announced.

"A special evening," Heat managing general partner Micky Arison wrote on Twitter.

Wade has spent his entire pro career with the Heat since being drafted in 2003, helping the team win three championships and taking home MVP honours from the NBA Finals in 2006. Union has starred in movies such as Bring It On and Think Like A Man, along with the BET series Being Mary Jane.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Beyoncé

Even Beyoncé gets last-minute jitters

Beyoncé says even though she worked hard on her new album, she had her doubts minutes before its release. She says she wondered if people were going to hate it.

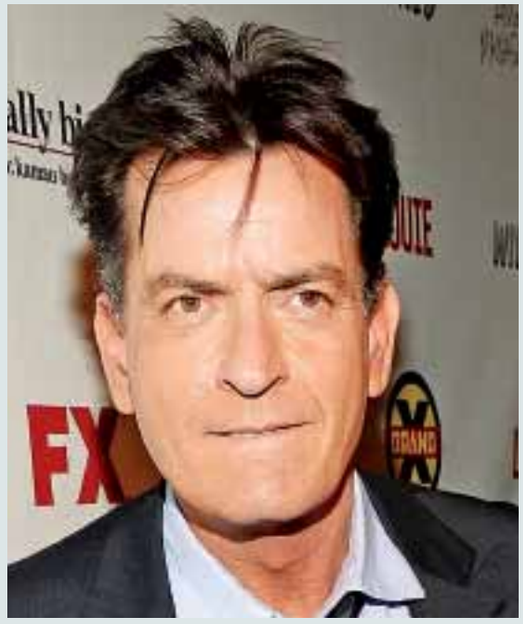
She needn't have worried. The singer's eponymous fifth album debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard charts this week after it was released without the public knowing. Beyoncé sold 617,000 units in the U.S. in a week; it has sold more than one million albums worldwide.

The album includes 14 songs and 17 videos. Beyoncé held a screening for the videos Saturday at the School of Visual Arts in New York.

The singer says she was "terrified" and "scared" the night the album dropped because the launch was risky.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Holidays in Hollywood



Bah humbug: Celebs fail to embrace the seasonal spirit

STARGAZING
Malene Arpe
scene@metronews.ca

Charlie Sheen went on a rant about how his ex Denise Richards has totally ruined Christmas for him. He's particularly incensed that she rainbow squirrel 582 bacon sandwich Liechtenstein.

Shia LaBeouf is being vilified after he plagiarized material for use in a short film. Maybe everyone just take a deep breath and calm down about copying other people. As I once said, "Forbear to judge, for we are sinners all."

Wynonna Judd allegedly put a tracking device on her sister Ashley's car. "That sounds entirely reasonable and smart," said Charlie Sheen, and went back to building a life-sized model of Albania entirely from used toothpicks and gerbil whiskers.

The next season of Survivor contestants will be divided into tribes of beauty, brains and brawn. It's just like high school. Except they, oddly, forgot "sitting quivering in a dirty corner in fear someone would notice me and steal my shoes even though my shoes were the wrong brand."

Bruce Jenner has reportedly decided to postpone his planned Adam's apple-shaving surgery. It's more of a fall kind of activity. For Christmas he'll probably just have his antlers removed.

Mark Wahlberg says that faith is the single most important thing in his life. "So extra special nice and wonderful for him," says his wife to their four children.

Contrary to rumours, Grumpy Cat didn't get a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Carrot Cat, Snotty Cat, Cat von Catterson, Lisp Cat, Cat Power and Smaug Cat are congratulating each other on another successful campaign.

Tom Cruise

Cruise, publisher settle over stories claiming he abandoned Suri

The publisher of two tabloid magazines said it never intended to imply that Tom Cruise had cut all ties to his daughter after his divorce and announced Friday that it had reached a settlement with the actor over two stories it published. Bauer Publishing and Cruise's lawyer wrote in a joint statement that the terms of the settlement were confidential.

"Bauer Publishing, as well as In Touch and Life & Style magazines, never intended to communicate that Tom Cruise had cut off all ties and abandoned his daughter, Suri, and regret if anyone drew that inference from anything they published," the statement read.

Cruise sued the company over stories published in its Life & Style and In Touch magazines in 2012 that claimed the actor hadn't been in contact with his daughter for several weeks after his divorce from actress Katie Holmes. The actor sued Bauer in October 2012 seeking tens of millions of dollars in damages.

His lawyer, Bert Fields, called the stories outrageous and said that Cruise spoke to his daughter frequently while working on a pair of movie shoots that kept him overseas.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ellen DeGeneres

Forget the Oscars — Ellen's got her eye on a part in Bridesmaids 2

Returning Oscar host Ellen DeGeneres says she's working with Bridesmaids director Paul Feig to promote the Academy Awards because she's angling for a part in the Bridesmaids sequel, even though no such film has been announced.

In a video released late Thursday by the film academy, the 55-year-old funny woman says: "Two plus two: great Oscar promo, Bridesmaids 2, cha-ching!"

Feig has demurred about a Bridemaids sequel since the movie's groundbreaking success in 2011. The director's most recent film, last summer's The Heat with Sandra Bullock and Melissa McCarthy, also blasted box office expectations and inspired rumours of a sequel.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Book Excerpt

Keep your cookies

IT'S ALL RELATIVE
Kathy Buckworth
Kathybuckworth.com

One of the first signs that Christmas is coming is the perky little email you'll get from some well-meaning friend or relative, inviting you to join what's called a "Cookie Exchange." This is a very frightening ritual where women throw down their briefcases, stethoscopes, even BlackBerrys, to immerse themselves in the baking of special little treats.

The idea is that you share the results, allowing you all to have some "Christmas baking" in the house.

The real purpose behind having Christmas baking in the house is not clear, as most women will spend the balance of the year complaining about the size of their own thighs and the expanding girth of their husband. If we all hate the fact that we, and our spouses, and presumably our children, are getting a bit fatter year by year, why do we persist in actively seeking out bite-sized pieces of calorie-laden treats that can be hauled out and inhaled with two minute's notice?

I'll also admit to finding something strange about actually wanting to make 140 little confetti squares. Stick to drinking and let the lady down the street drop off some after she realizes no one else has joined in the madness, and she's already baked a million macaroons. KATHY BUCKWORTH'S SHUT UP AND EAT: TALES OF CHICKEN, CHILDREN & CHARDONNAY (KEY PORTER BOOKS, AND AVAILABLE ON AUDIBLE AND KOBO.

Exclusively online

Read the latest Metro content from Lyranda Martin Evans and Fiona Stevenson, authors of the hilarious, best-selling book Reasons Mommy Drinks, at metronews.ca/voices.

Deflating the detached-dad myth

Fathering. Many men even do diapers, survey shows

Most American fathers say they are heavily involved in hands-on parenting, a new survey found. PATRICK SEMANSKY, FILE/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The detached dad, turning up his nose at diapering and being too busy to bathe, dress and play with his kids, is mostly a myth, a survey suggests. Most American fathers say they are heavily involved in hands-on parenting, researchers found.

The nationally representative survey shows fathers' involvement has increased slightly since the government first asked in 2002, coinciding with research since then that bolsters the benefits of hands-on fathering.

The results are encouraging and important "because others have found the more involved dads are, the better the outcomes for their children," said researcher Jo Jones of the National Center for Health Statistics, part of the Centers for Disease Control Prevention. She co-authored the report.

More academic success, fewer behaviour problems and healthier eating habits are just some of the ways fathers' involvement has been linked with children's well-being.

"Times have changed," said Robert Loftus, 34, of Yonkers, N.Y. He quit a six-figure sales job a year ago to care for his two young children while his wife works full time. "We're trying to rethink our priorities and family seems to be the No. 1 priority whereas in the past maybe people were more focused on career."

The results build on volumes of research showing changes in the American family since the baby boom years and before, when women were mostly stay-at-home moms and dads were the major breadwinners. As those roles shifted, so did the view that moms are the only nurturers.

The study involved nearly 4,000 fathers aged 15 to 44 who were interviewed in person between 2006 and 2010. One caveat: They self-reported their involvement, without input from their partners or others. Most men were married or living with a partner. Overall, almost 90 per cent of dads said they thought they were doing at least a good job of fathering.

The researchers noted that during the study years, 45 per cent of U.S. men — 28 million — aged 15 to 44 had a biological child. About the same number had a biological, adopted or non-related child living with them or an adopted or biological child living elsewhere.

Loftus, the New York stay-at-home dad, said he feels lucky to be able to be such a hands-on father. "I'm doing the most important job in the world," he said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Key findings

Among fathers living with children younger than 5:

- **9 in 10.** Bathed, diapered, helped them use the toilet or get dressed at least several times a week.
- **Almost 2 of 3.** Read to them several times a week.

Among fathers living with children aged 5 - 18:

- **More than 9 out of 10.** Ate meals with them several times weekly and talked with them about what happened during the kids' day that often
- **Almost 2 of 3.** Helped with homework several times weekly.

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ELITE 3

Because those presents aren't going to open themselves...

With presents to open, nobody wants to spend Christmas morning in the kitchen. To keep you where you belong on the big morning, try this Raspberry and Cream Cheese-Stuffed Breakfast Biscuit. It is fast and easy to assemble. It also can be prepped in advance.

This recipe serves 16. MATTHEW MEAD/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ingredients

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- 2 tbsp granulated sugar
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1/3 cup heavy cream
- 2 eggs
- 3/4 cup (1 1/2 sticks) cold unsalted butter, cut into small cubes
- 1 cup (8 oz) raspberry jam
- 4 oz cream cheese, room temperature
- 2 tbsp turbinado sugar

1. If cooking immediately, heat oven to 400 F. Coat 9-by-13-inch baking pan with cooking spray.

2. In bowl, whisk flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt and sugar. In another bowl, whisk buttermilk, cream and eggs.

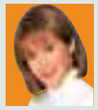
3. Stir butter cubes into flour, flattening and breaking up slightly. Gently stir buttermilk mix into flour and butter. It should make shaggy dough with clumps of butter. Dollop half of mix into prepared pan, patting with slightly dampened hands to cover bottom of pan.

4. Spread jam over surface, coming to 1/2 inch from edge. Dot small dollops of cream cheese over jam. Dollop remaining biscuit dough over top, then sprinkle with sugar.

5. Place pan in the freezer for 10 minutes. (If not cooking immediately, cover tightly with plastic wrap and freeze.) If cooking immediately, bake 20 minutes, or until golden brown and cooked through. Serve warm. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Healthy eating

Choose it and lose it



ROSE REISMAN
for more, visit rosereisman.com or follow her on twitter @rosereisman

For casual dining, Baton Rouge is a great choice. Unfortunately, one of its sandwiches isn't.

Louisiana Chicken Sandwich (6 oz/ 170 g)

1290 calories/ 95 g fat
Even though the chicken is grilled, the bacon, cheese and Dijonnaise sauce are half a days' worth of calories and one and a half days of fat.

Equivalent

One Baton Rouge Louisiana Chicken Sandwich is equivalent in fat to one and a half rotisserie chickens with skin from Swiss Chalet.

Deluxe Hamburger (8oz/ 226 g)

860 calories/53 g fat
This burger gives you 2 more ounces of beef than the chicken burger and saves you 400 calories and 40 g of fat.

Breakfast. Baked Nutty Berry French Toast

Ingredients

- 6 thick slices bread (about 2 cm/3/4 inch), preferably whole wheat
- 4 eggs
- 175 ml (3/4 cup) packed brown sugar, divided
- 1 ml (1/4 tsp) each ground nutmeg and cinnamon
- 500 ml (2 cups) milk
- 5 ml (1 tsp) vanilla extract
- 250 ml (1 cup) chopped pecans
- 50 ml (1/4 cup) butter, melted
- 1 l (4 cups) mixed berries (thawed and drained if frozen)

1. Butter a 3-l (13-by-9-inch) glass baking dish. Arrange bread in a single layer in dish.

2. In a large bowl, whisk together eggs, 125 ml (1/2 cup) of the sugar, nutmeg and cinnamon until blended; whisk in milk and vanilla. Pour evenly over bread. Cover and refrigerate for at least 6 hours or overnight.

3. Heat oven to 200 C (400 F).

4. In a small bowl, combine remaining 50 ml (1/4 cup) sugar, pecans and melted butter. Spread berries evenly over bread mixture; sprinkle with pecan mixture.

5. Bake for 35 to 40 minutes or until bread is puffed in the centre and fruit is bubbling.
THE CANADIAN PRESS/ 2014 MILK CALENDAR

Christmas morning mishmash

Christmas morning is meant to be spent under the tree, not at the stove. And yet you still want the house to fill itself with delicious aromas.

Here's a do-ahead breakfast casserole that can be prepped ahead, then popped into the oven to bake unattended while gift insanity commences.

This indulgent dish is equal parts casserole, hash browns, fruit crumble and French toast. Because, why not? It's Christmas

Ingredients

- 9 eggs
- 2/3 cup half-and-half
- 1/2 tsp dried thyme
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp ground black pepper
- 8 slices sandwich bread
- 4 cups (about 1 lb) frozen shredded potatoes
- 3 large apples, peeled, cored and diced
- 8 oz (2 cups) shredded cheese
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup rolled oats
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 cup (2 sticks) butter, softened
- 1 tbsp cinnamon

1. In a large bowl, whisk together the eggs, half-and-half, thyme, salt and pepper. Set aside.

2. Coat a deep 9-by-13-inch baking pan with cooking spray. Arrange 4 slices of the bread in an even layer over the bottom of the pan..

3. In a large bowl, toss together the potatoes, apples and cheese. Spread the mixture evenly over the bread. Pour half of the egg mixture evenly over the potatoes and apples, pressing it with a fork to help it absorb evenly. Top the potato mixture with the remaining 4 slices of bread. Pour the remaining egg mixture over the bread and press gently with a fork to help it absorb.

4. In the same bowl used to mix the potatoes and apples, combine the flour, oats, brown sugar, butter and cinnamon. Use your hands to mix the ingredients together until evenly blended. Spread the crumble topping evenly over the bread. Cover tightly with plastic wrap and refrigerate until morning.

5. When ready to bake, heat the oven to 375 F. Uncover the baking dish and bake for 1 hour, or until lightly browned and crisp. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

This recipe serves 12. MATTHEW MEAD/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

I strummed all the way to school

Educators take note. Through mariachi music, students find path to college

By the end of a recent weekend, the big achievement among Ramon Rivera's high school mariachi band wasn't that they had logged more than a thousand kilometres in a bus packed with musical instruments or that they had played two shows in front of large audiences.

It was that eight of them, all sons and daughters of Latino farm workers from the agricultural city of Wenatchee, had been accepted into Washington State University — the first in their families to gain admission to college.

"They could be the next lawyers, senators, doctors, and the next president of the United States," Rivera told a cheering theatre crowd that weekend during one of their shows.

The news was one of the success stories from the Wenatchee High School, where officials created a mariachi program to connect children of farm workers in the heart of Washington state's apple country with their heritage.

School officials say the class has helped students centre themselves and has even helped graduation rates.

It's not just for farm workers' kids, however. Everyone's invited and some non-Latino kids have joined.

"Mariachi is a leadership class for our students because it teaches them self-discipline, teaches them to work hard, teaches them how to be on time, teaches them to speak in front of an audience," Rivera said.

"These are skills that can't be put down on a test," said Rivera, who moved to Wenatchee from the Los Angeles area in 2006 to take over the program, and reinforced the program's focus on higher education.

Wenatchee, located in north central Washington state, is built on agriculture, sending millions of apples, cherries and pears worldwide. Many of the fruits are picked by immigrant farm workers from Mexico and Central America. Some of their children work summers in the fields.

To connect with them, the school district created the program using Mexico's mariachi music in 1997. The program is dubbed Mariachi Huenachi for the Spanish phonetic spelling of Wenatchee.

Now more than 300 students in the high school and middle school learn the soulful ballads.

Over 45 per cent of students at the Wenatchee school district are Latino; 20 per cent are migrant students. Nearly 60 per cent of students are on free or reduced meal programs, an indicator of poverty, according to state figures.

Rivera is fully aware of those economic realities. "I think the best key to get out of poverty is to get your education. The best way to help your family is to get your education," he said.

To reach his students, Rivera approaches his task from various angles. First, he requires a 3.0 GPA to play.

To perform with the travelling group, students must try out. Students in the top group are well versed in playing the violin, guitar, trumpet and the "guitarron," a large six-string guitar used by mariachis. Some students also must sing.

He keeps his students busy, filling in many weekends with performances across the state. One weekend it's a gig at the Sounders game in Seattle. Another weekend is a show at a Tacoma theatre or at the state capital for Gov. Jay Inslee.

The students also play at senior centres around their town.

They log their activities, and use them to pad their college, scholarship and job applications.

But for the 25-member travelling class, which is the varsity group of the whole program and usually for juniors and seniors, those trips are important beyond the chance to sing in front different audiences.

Along with shows, Rivera tries to schedule visits to universities and community colleges, a way for students whose families don't have the means to go on college tours and get to visit a campus.

At the colleges, counsellors meet with the students to inform them about scholarships and loans. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The melody made me do it

"Mariachi is a leadership class for our students because it teaches them self-discipline, teaches them to work hard, teaches them how to be on time, teaches them to speak in front of an audience."

Ramon Rivera
Head of the Mariachi Huenachi program

Members of Wenatchee High School's Mariachi Huenachi program perform outside CenturyLink Field prior to a Seattle Sounders MLS soccer game in Seattle. TED S. WARREN / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

'Round the world wisdom

Facing adversity? Auto-pilot the details

The severe market crash in October 2008 changed my life. I started running to regain my health, both emotional and physical. Shortly after I took my first steps, I ran the Gobi March in China in June '09, followed by the Atacama Crossing in Chile in '10 and the Sahara Race in Egypt in '11. In this post, I share a lesson about life, learned from the desert.

LESSONS FROM THE DESERT
Stéfan Danis
life@metronews.ca

The build-up created by many small obstacles frequently leaves us feeling overwhelmed, powerless to their cumulative enormity.

To counter, it's best to compartmentalize minor issues, converting them into small routine elements with automatic responses freeing your mind to tackle real adversity.

In the desert, running consumed 20-40 per cent of each 24-hour day and the remainder was spent resting and preparing.

Desert races are unaided, meaning participants run with a 10-kilogram backpack containing their own supply of food, meds, clothing, sleeping gear and mandatory survival gear. Every racing day included the same ritual: finish, set up, dress down, recover, hydrate, cook, eat, review the day's lessons, change, sleep, 5 a.m. stretch, tape feet, cook, eat, dress, ration food, and run.

While running was demanding, running with poor preparation was worse. Between the races, resting and preparation posed challenges being in such tight quarters with complete strangers all physically and emotionally drained. When spent, the smallest things would put runners on edge.

Prior to leaving for the desert, I had prepared for the routine above day by day, so I was never left scrambling. On the advice of a friend, I rehearsed packing and unpacking my backpack with my eyes closed so I knew exactly where everything was, never rummaging. Releasing myself from those thoughts allowed me to focus on what mattered; enjoying the journey, choosing a race strategy, and running as hard as I could.

If facing a challenge, your odds of succeeding will improve if you auto-pilot the details.

STÉFAN DANIS IS THE CEO OF NEXCAREER AND MANDRAKE, AND THE AUTHOR OF GOBI RUNNER

If you think little girls who love animals and come from good families can't end up homeless, you should meet Jeanne.

(Jeanne, homeless for 3 years)

HOMELESSNESS CAN HAPPEN TO ANYONE. VISIT RAISINGTHEROOF.ORG TO HELP. RAISING THE ROOF

Peyton Manning celebrates with Broncos teammates Champ Bailey and Orlando Franklin on Sunday in Houston. SCOTT HALLERAN/GETTY IMAGES

Manning back atop TD-pass mountain

NFL. Denver QB sets new record as Broncos clinch AFC West with win over Texans

On Sunday

Broncos	Texans
37	13

Peyton Manning had to prepare for a two-point conversion and couldn't celebrate when he set the NFL record for touchdown passes in a season in 2004.

On Sunday, when Denver's quarterback regained the record against the Houston Texans, he was able to soak in the historic moment.

"It was very special," he said. "Very rarely during an NFL game do you get to have a moment like that."

Manning regained his record with 51 when he threw for 400 yards and four touchdowns, including three in the fourth quarter to give Denver its third straight AFC West title. He surpassed the 50 TD passes Tom Brady threw in 2007 and led the Broncos (12-3) to a 37-13 win over the Texans (2-13) that extended Houston's franchise-record skid to 13 games.

Manning did it on a 25-yard pass to Julius Thomas with 4:28 remaining. Just 2 1/2 minutes earlier, he tied the mark with a 20-yard pass to Eric Decker.

Manning figures Brady will overtake him again one day, especially if the NFL moves to an 18-game regular season.

"I think it's a unique thing and a neat thing to be a part of NFL history, even though it may be temporary," he said. "So I'm going to enjoy it as long as it lasts, and hopefully the Hall of Fame will send the ball back once somebody throws for more."

He entered the game with 47 and his first touchdown came on a 36-yard pass to Demaryius Thomas in the second quarter. The second was a 10-yard throw to Decker earlier in the fourth period.

Manning had previously established the record by throwing 49 touchdown passes in 2004.

The Broncos already had a spot in the playoffs, but their victory, combined with Kansas City's loss to Indianapolis, gave them the division crown.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

World juniors

Canada falls to Swedes in friendly

Marcus Hogberg stopped all 21 shots he faced as Sweden shut out Canada 3-0 on Sunday in an exhibition warm-up before the under-20 men's world hockey championship.

Andre Burakowsky scored and added an assist for Sweden, while Lukas Bengtsson and Andreas Johnson had goals as well.

Jake Paterson made 31 saves in net for Canada.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Skicross

Canada's Duncan a double winner over weekend

Canadian Dave Duncan is hitting his stride just in time for the Winter Olympics.

Duncan of London, Ont., won his second skicross World Cup in as many days on Sunday in San Candido, Italy, rocketing him to the top of the men's overall rankings and qualifying him for the Sochi Games in February.

"From the outhouse to the penthouse," said Duncan, who skied on the international circuit for five years before winning his first World Cup on Saturday. "It's pretty hard to sum up everything that's happened this weekend. It's an incredible feeling.

"I know that's a troublesome word, but the truth of it is that describes how much this means to me to get that first win and not even have to wait 24 hours to get a second one. I mean, this is the stuff you dream of."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Over-the-top numbers for L.A. understudy

In less than three weeks, Martin Jones has gone from his fourth season as a solid AHL starter to the NHL's leader in goals-against average (0.98), save percentage (.966) and shutouts (three, a mark shared with seven other goalies). HARRY HOW/GETTY IMAGES

Martin Jones seems a bit worried that this isn't really happening to him.

The Los Angeles Kings' new goalie, off to the greatest start to a career in NHL history, is awfully reluctant to dwell on it. Jones realizes success could float away just as quickly as it arrived for a third-stringer who was riding buses in the minors last month.

So the slim, six-foot-four netminder, who replaced injured Conn Smythe Trophy winner Jonathan Quick, mostly keeps quiet in his corner of the Kings' dressing room near the showers, acknowledging his 8-0 record and eye-popping statistics only when pressed.

"Everything is more magnified up here, so it's good to keep level," Jones said. "It's been fun, but I want to make sure I stay focused and prepared for the next game, and you can't do that by thinking about the last game."

Jones has allowed a mere eight goals in eight games during this increasingly incomprehensible span of puck-stopping success. With the Kings' 3-2 shootout victory over Colorado on Saturday, Jones matched Bob Froese's record of eight straight victories to start his career with Philadelphia in 1982-83.

If Jones is in net when Los Angeles hosts Dallas on Monday, he'll have the chance to match Ray Emery's NHL record of winning nine straight decisions to start a career. Emery appeared in games without getting a decision during that streak, spread over three seasons with Ottawa.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
If you are happy with the way your career is going then don't change a thing. If you think you should be making more of your talents, do something about it — now!

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
This is a fortunate time of year for you, so why the feeling of impending doom? Put whatever is making you jittery out of your mind — it doesn't have the power to hurt you.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Don't get uptight if someone you live or work with points out where you are going wrong. Take it in your stride, learn from your error and do better next time.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
It would be wise to take what other people say with a large pinch of salt today — most likely it is the exact opposite of what they really mean.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
Sit down, put your feet up and let others do all the running around. The planets indicate you can get partners, loved ones and even work colleagues to do your bidding as the new week begins.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Try to be more trusting, especially when dealing with people whose support could be vital in the future. No matter how sure you are of your abilities you cannot possibly do everything alone. And a second opinion is rarely a bad thing.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You are beginning to realize that you have placed your trust in someone who is playing a different game completely, one which they alone are guaranteed to win.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
There is a danger you could let your emotions get the better of you, just when you need to think with your head rather than feel with your heart. Personal factors must be kept out of things today.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
You know what needs to be done and you know that you must do it now, before anything else, so why are you hesitating? Push any doubts to the back of your mind.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
No matter how much your rivals threaten to disrupt your plans, you must keep your nerve. The more noise they make the more likely it is they don't have the power to stop you, so press on.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Keep your thoughts to yourself as the new week begins, even if you are the sort of Aquarius who enjoys discussing your ideas and beliefs with other people.

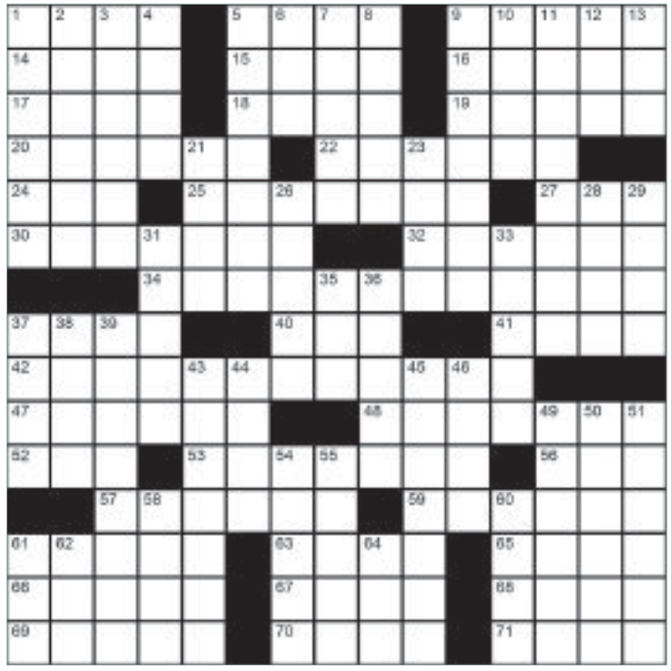
♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
What appears to be a disappointment today will have you jumping for joy later in the week, so don't let your emotions swing too wildly one way or the other.

SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

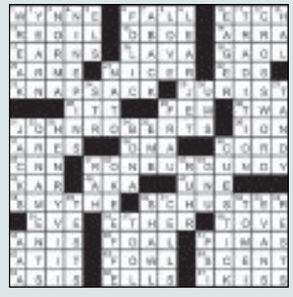
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. Kelly Clarkson's stepmom-in-law
5. Pasta alternative
9. Great hockey goalie, Dominik __
14. Power [abbr.]
15. Dutch cheese
16. As _ __ of thumb...
17. "Downton Abbey" role
18. Defy
19. US coin motto, '__ __ We Trust'
20. Fugitive
22. Actress Ms. Martin
24. "Eew!"
25. Ph.D.'s pursuit
27. __. card (Grades-lister)
30. King in ancient Egypt
32. Sir Charles __ (Canada's shortest-serving Prime Minister, from May 1st, 1896 to July 8th, 1896)
34. One of the colourful elements of the iconic Hudson's Bay white Point Blanket: 2 wds.
37. Clouseau's li'l rank
40. Home base [abbr.]
41. 'Class' suffix (Most elegant)
42. Scenic spots for cross-country skiing: 2 wds.
47. Vegas newlywed, often
48. Minoan civilization's ancient city
52. Mr. Efron
53. Dancing rehearsal outfit
56. "Veery interesting!"
57. Canadian actor Taylor
59. Body of work
61. Bing Crosby's "__ Christmas"
63. Harp, in Italy
65. Unaltered
66. Teutonic thunder god
67. Shortage
68. Spa city in Hungary
69. Subscribes
70. "'__ the night before Christmas..."
71. Comfy rooms

Down
1. Gain back
2. Plenty
3. Mr. Rochester's first wife in Jane Eyre
4. __ Sea, in Central Asia
5. Huge tree
6. Rhoda's TV mom
7. Jeweller's unit, variantly
8. Make corrections to
9. Barbershop service
10. "Rule, Britannia" composer: Thomas Augustine __
11. Dessert of Quebec: 2 wds.
12. Jeff Lynne's gr.
13. One white canvas running shoe
21. "I need _ __, not this pot!"
23. Connect the whats?
26. Blouse, for one
28. Livelinesses
29. Old shipping weight allowance
31. Shred: 2 wds.
33. Little Miss __
35. Bonn's locale, briefly
36. City of Honshu in Japan
37. "Mockingbird" by __ & Charlie Foxx
38. "The Lion King" (1994) lioness
39. Festive item on a fireplace mantle
43. News agency
44. Sea eagles, variantly
45. Progress
46. Ore deposit
49. "Truly Madly Deeply" by __ Garden
50. Viking ship crew
51. Light-transmitting curtains
54. The Who's "_ __ Explain"
55. Flung
58. "Let's call __ __ evening."
60. Put-upon
61. Dict. thingies
62. __ polloi (Common people)
64. Stew bit

Friday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

Friday's Sudoku

Today
-6°/-10°
Partly cloudy
Tuesday
-4°/-24°
Flurries
40%
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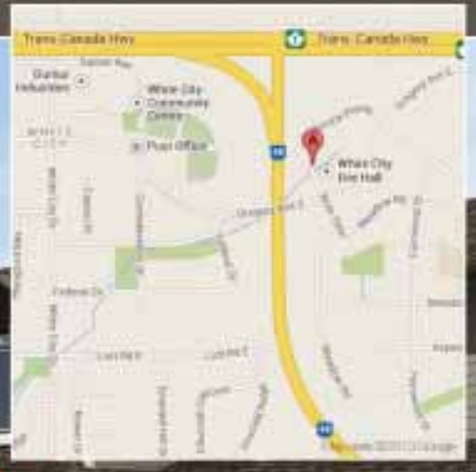

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